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\$/8/2005 Appeal Brief re application #09/752,365 (Weinstein et al.)

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re Application of:

LEE WEINSTEIN, SCOTT BROWN

Serial No. 09/752,365 Art Unit 2643 Filed: December 29, 2000 Examiner Barry W. Taylor For:

METHOD AND APPARATUS FACILITATING THE PLACING, RECEIVING, AND BILLING OF TELEPHONE CALLS

APPEAL BRIEF

Real Party in Interest

The subject application is owned by the inventors, who have appointed Lee Weinstein their common representative.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences.

Status of Claims

As of the most recent office action received (dated 9/8/2004) claims 1, 7-11, 13, 15, 22-23, 25, 27, 29-38, 40-44, 46-51, 53, 54, 59-61, 63, 66-68, 71-75, and 77 are rejected. Claims 2-6, 12, 14, 16-21, 24, 26, 28, 39, 45, 52, 55-58, 62, 64-65, 69-70, and 76 have been cancelled. No claims have yet been allowed or withdrawn.

Status of Amendments

On March 8, 2005, concurrent with the notice of appeal, the appellant filed an amendment after final rejection, amending claim 15 and correcting a claim numbering mistake pointed out by the examiner regarding claims 76 and 77. The appellant believes the amendments are entitled to entry under the standards set forth in MPEP §1207. No response has been received from the examiner regarding the amendment, at the time of filing of this brief.

Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

There are five independent claims being separately appealed (claims 1, 50, 51, 67, and 71). Appellant also desires to appeal all rejected dependent claims individually, in addition to appealing the independent claims. Appellant provides below a description of the inventions claimed in the independent claims, and claim 7.

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The invention described in appellant's claim 1 comprises an apparatus which allows potential call recipients to specify what calling parties are allowed to call them, and when. The apparatus enables people to speak by telephone without either giving the other his or her phone number. Provided a calling party has been specified as an allowed caller by a potential called party, the calling party may contact the called party by initiating a call through a website. When the call is initiated, provided the call is initiated within a time window allowed by the called party, the apparatus places multiple outbound telephone calls from an outbound call engine and connects the two parties together, without either knowing the other's phone number. If the calling party attempts to initiate the call outside the time window allowed by the called party, the apparatus communicates to the calling party the times that such a call would be allowed.

The invention described in appellant's claim 7 comprises an apparatus which allows potential call recipients to specify what calling parties are allowed to call them, and when. The apparatus enables people to speak by telephone without either giving the other his or her phone number. Provided a calling party has been specified as an allowed caller by a potential called party, and the call is initiated within a time window when the called party has individually specified that the calling party is allowed to call, the calling party may contact the called party by initiating a call through a website. When the call is initiated within a time window individually specified by the called party for the calling party to call, the apparatus places multiple outbound telephone calls from an outbound call engine and connects the two parties together, without either knowing the other's phone number. If the calling party attempts to initiate the call outside the time window allowed by the called party, the apparatus communicates to the calling party the times that such a call would be allowed.

The invention described in claim 50 is a method of fund-raising, comprising auctioning (via the world-wide web) teleconference time with celebrities. Thus, those celebrity fans who bid the highest amount per minute get to be on the phone with a celebrity they admire, and the celebrity gets to raise money for a charitable cause while simultaneously stirring up interest and excitement in his or her fan base.

The invention described in appellant's claim 51 comprises method allowing two people to speak by telephone without either having the other's phone number, and without either being able to initiate contact with the other unless the called party has specifically allowed the call-initiating party to initiate contact, and unless the contact is initiated within a time window specified by the called party. This method allows potential call recipients to specify what calling parties are allowed to call them, and when. Provided a calling party has been specified as an allowed caller by a potential called party, and the call is initiated within a time window when the called party has individually specified that the calling party is allowed to call, the calling party may contact the called party by initiating a call through a website. When the call is initiated within a time window individually specified by the called party for the calling party to call, multiple outbound telephone calls are placed from an outbound call engine which then connects the two parties together, without either knowing the other's phone number.

The invention described in claim 67 is a method of placing an international telephone calls between a call-initiating party and a called party, by placing multiple outbound telephone calls from an internet-controlled call engine, and connecting the call-initiating party and the called party after both have answered the phone. This enables people in countries with very high outgoing international phone charges to place international calls at rates comparable to the lowest rates of any country, because the call engine can reside in a country which has available very low international calling rates, and any two people in any two countries can be connected by two calls placed from the country with the low rates.

The invention in claim 71 is a method for placing long-distance calls at rates optimized over many different calling plans from many different carriers, without switching long-distance carriers. The method allows the user to take advantage of many different long-distance providers (to get the best rate for the call placed) without the user to switch long-distance providers, because all calls are placed as conferenced multiple outbound calls from a call engine at a location remote to the user, so the user is actually receiving a call (and so is the person the user is calling), because the call is initiated over the internet, rather than by dialing a phone. The call engine calls the call-initiating party (for instance, using a local line in a metropolitan area) and then calls the call-receiving party (using long-distance carrier selected on the basis of lowest cost for the particular call placed). Thus a caller can have a long-distance plan selected (for instance) for cheap domestic rates (but which doesn't have good international rates), and still place international calls at cheap rates as well, through the adjunct service. Thus users can always get the benefit of the lowest-priced long-distance provider of the day, without switching long-distance providers.

The claims on appeal are set forth in appendix A, shown amended with the abovementioned amendment, with removed text struck through and added text underlined.

Grounds of Rejection to be reviewed on appeal

Claims 1, 15, and 51 were rejected by the examiner under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claim 76 was rejected by the examiner under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.

Claims 1, 7, 9-11, 13, 15, 22-23, 25, 27, 29-38, 40-44, 48, 51, 53-54, 59-61, 63, 66-68 and 71-75 were rejected by the examiner under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glenn et al (5,907,677 hereinafter Glenn) in view of DuVal (5,818,836) and Haste, III (6,665,389 hereinafter Haste) further in view of Cho (5,937,039). Claims 8, 46-47 and 49-50 were rejected by the examiner under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glenn et al (5,907,677 hereinafter Glenn) in view of DuVal (5,818,836), Haste, III (6,665,389 hereinafter Haste) and Cho (5,937,039) further in view of Lauffer (6,549,889).

Evidence

Appellants have not thus far submitted any §§ 1.130, 1.131, or 1.132 affidavits as part of prosecution. We have submitted with this appeal brief copies of all U.S. patents cited by the examiner in his final rejections of claims. The following is a list of the patents relied upon by the examiner in his 9/8/2004 (final) office action:

Glenn et al (5,907,677 hereinafter Glenn) DuVal (5,818,836) Haste, III (6,665,389 hereinafter Haste) Cho (5,937,039) Lauffer (6,549,889)

Arguments

In item 1, the examiner rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement, stating that a text search was unable to find the terms "allowed callers from who customers are willing to receive calls" in the specification. One of the main innovative points of the present invention is that calls can only be received from allowed callers, and that until a call recipient allows a caller, no calls can be received from that caller. Call-enabling table 834 in central customer database 816 in figure 8 contains the allowed-caller data. The first paragraph on page 61 describes a user setting up "allowed call reception times". The brief description of figure 6 speaks of "times and dates of allowed call reception from a selected caller". The last paragraph on page 15 speaks of "The allowed contact times for John to call Mary". The last paragraph on page 16 speaks of the user filling in "allowed contact time windows". Since an allowed contact time window must be filled in for each caller, it would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that each caller specified is inherently an allowed caller and each caller not specified is inherently not an allowed caller. The last paragraph of page 29 refers to callers being able to access "names of people he is presently allowed to contact". A caller who is allowed to contact a given person is inherently an allowed caller for that given person. This would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art. We submit that all the above-referenced parts of the specification (and many more) give adequate support to claim 1 as amended as required by 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

In item 2, the examiner rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement, stating that a text search was unable to find the terms "timing telephone connection time". Real-time clock 836 in figure 8 provides support in the figures. The last paragraph on page 36 speaks of how "timing software actuates SS7 interface 823 to 'tear down' or disconnect any call in progress when the account balance hits zero". It is inherent in this feature of the invention that call connection times are being monitored. We thus submit that this would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art, and that claim 15 as amended has adequate 35 U.S.C. 112 first paragraph support in the specification.

In item 3, the examiner rejects claim 51 under 35 U.S.C 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement, stating that a text search was unable to find the terms "specifying a call-initiating party", "specifying a call-receiving party",

"verifying a call time is within", and "checking with a database to verify that said callinitiating party is specified as an allowed caller by said call-receiving party", and "allowed caller". The method described in claim 51 in inherent in the examples given in the brief description, detailed description, and in the figures. An example of "specifying a call-initiating party" is shown in part in enabled caller list 504 and "add new contact" button 501 in figure 5, and in part in the call management screen shown in figure 6. The step of verifying that a call time is within an allowed call time window is referred to in the specification as setting up "allowed call times" in the last paragraph of page 16. How the system uses allowed call times is also referred to in the next to the last paragraph of page 17 and the first paragraph of page 18. The exact mechanics of specifying allowed call reception times are depicted in the bottom half of the configuration screen depicted in figure 6. We submit that it would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art how to implement the method of claim 51, given the specification and the drawings, and we submit that to one of ordinary skill in the art having read the patent application in its entirety, the method of claim 51 would be an inherent part of the examples given in the specification.

In item 7, the examiner rejects claims 1, 7, 9-11, 13, 15, 22-23, 25, 27, 29-38, 40-44, 48, 51, 53-54, 59-61, 63, 66-68, and 71-75 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glen (5,907,677) in view of DuVal (5,818,836) and Haste (6,665,389) further in view of Cho (5,937,039). We do not believe there is anything in the above references that suggest they all be combined. In addition, the Cho patent requires users to record and store the voice messages describing their absence (and perhaps suggesting alternate call times). It is not a system for enforcement of unreachability during prescribed times. and it is certainly not a system allowing specification of reachability within certain times. It does not automatically generate messages. It requires users to record messages. This is very far from the features of the present invention the examiner claims that combining Cho with the other references listed will make obvious. We have previously objected to the combining of what is now a sub-combination of the examiner's suggested combined references, as containing nothing to suggest their combination. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious. unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. In re Kotzab, 217 F.3d 1365, 1371, 55 USPQ2d 1313, 1318 (Fed. Cir. 2000); In re Mills, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990). MPEP §2143.01. The examiner has stated that previous arguments are moot in view of new grounds of rejection, but since the new ground of rejection relies in this case on the old, we submit that our previous argument in this regard is not mute.

In item 8 the examiner rejects claims 8, 46-47, and 49-50 under U.S.C 103(a)as being unpatentable over Glenn (5,907,677) in view of DuVal (5,818,836), Haste (6,665,389) and Cho (5,937,039) further in view of Lauffer (6,549,889). Again, we submit that there is nothing in the above references suggesting that they all be combined. *In re Kotzab*, 217 F.3d 1365, 1371, 55 USPQ2d 1313, 1318 (Fed. Cir. 2000); *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990). MPEP §2143.01.

Although the applicants have pointed out to the examiner in the response to the previous office action that claim 71 has not been addressed by the examiner, and that claim 71 is

an independent claim unique and apart from all other claims in that it claims an aspect of the present invention which facilitates the placement of long-distance telephone calls at optimized rates, the examiner has continued to lump the rejection of claim 71 with other claims covering substantially different aspects of the present invention. None of the references cited by the examiner to date have addressed the patentability of claim 71.

Claim 67 is also an independent claim which has not been properly addressed by the examiner. Claim 67 claims an aspect of the present invention facilitating the placing of international telephone calls for vastly reduced rates. None of the references the examiner has cited appear to be prior art to this claim.

It is our understanding that the Supreme Court has recognized among indicia of unobviousness several factors, including:

- (a) Long felt but unsatisfied need for the invention while the needed implementing arts and elements had long been available:
- (b) Appreciation that a problem existed and what the problem was were theretofore unrecognized by those skilled in the art;

There has been a long-felt need to make long-distance and international phone calls as cheaply as possible. Many systems such as international call-back systems which allow a user to call a number in the USA and put in a touch-tone sequence to have the system call back have existed for years to try to provide cheap calls. These systems are far more cumbersome than the present invention, and not suited for day-to-day business calls. The present invention not only optimizes rates, but provides one-click internet-initiated call dialing. Thus, we believe that (a) above applies to claims 67 and 71 as a secondary indication of unobviousness.

The cumbersomeness of touch-tone-initiated international call-back systems and low-priced calling card systems limits the number of consumers willing to learn the complexities of using these systems. The simple one-click nature of the present invention solves this cumbersomeness problem which providers of these systems had not recognized as a key limitation. Thus, we believe that (b) above applies to claims 67 and 71 as a secondary indication of unobviousness.

For people using internet dating websites, there has been a long-felt need to be able to sort through a larger number of potential dating partners in a way faster and more reliable than writing and receiving a long stream of time-consuming e-mails. There has likewise been a need for a way for people to communicate by telephone with not-yet-trusted people, in a way that provides flexibility and high call quality, without compromising privacy. The present invention as claimed in claims 1 and 51 meets this need in ways no other invention to date has (although the technology to do so has been around for years), and we therefore believe that (a) above applies to claims 1, 7, and 51 as a secondary indication of unobviousness.

Summary

For the foregoing reasons, appellant believes that the examiner's rejections claims 1, 7-11, 13, 22-23, 25, 27, 29-38, 40-44, 46-48, 50-51, 53, 54, 59-61, 63, 66-68, and 71-75 are erroneous, and reversal of his decisions is respectfully requested. Appellant believes that the amendment filed after final rejection overcomes the examiners rejection of claim 15, and allowance of claim 15 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Weinstein

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Lee Weinstein

Claims Appendix

APPARATUS CLAIMS:

- 1. (Previously presented) An apparatus facilitating the placing conferenced multiple outbound telephone calls, comprising:
 - a. an internet-connected computer for receiving dialing information over the internet;
 - b. an outbound call engine capable for placing a plurality of outbound telephone calls, said call engine responsive to said dialing information;
 - c. call conferencing means capable of connecting a plurality of outbound telephone calls together;
 - d. a database comprising "allowed times" when customers have specified they are willing to receive calls, and "allowed callers" from whom customers are willing to receive calls;
 - e. means for automatically communicating said allowed times to callers who attempt to initiate calls outside said allowed times; and
 - f. enabling means for enabling said outbound call engine only when said allowed time and allowed caller criteria are met.
- 7. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said allowed time criteria is separately definable for different allowed callers.
- 8. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said enabled caller information further comprises for each customer allowed contact time windows during which calls will be accepted from other customers, further

comprising means to automatically notify a customer by e-mail when an enabled caller's last allowed contact time windows have expired.

- 9. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein customers from whom calls will be accepted can be defined as a group.
- 10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said dialing information for a customer calling as a member of a group includes both group-identifying information and individual-customer-identifying information.
- 11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said call-acceptance criteria further comprises call-blocking information specifying for each customer any individual customers from whom calls will not be accepted.
- 13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising call-acceptance criteria specifying which customers can call a given customer and which criteria are modifiable via a website by said given customer.
 - 15. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim <u>15</u>, further comprising:

a database for storing customer information;
means for timing telephone connection time;
means for calculating charges based on telephone
connection time; and

wherein said database further comprises past charges accrued for each customer and billability status for customers, indicating whether each customer is billable for calls they set up, and whether they are billable for calls others set up to them, wherein billability status for each customer with respect to each other customer may be individually defined.

- 22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said database further comprises call scheduling information, and conferenced outbound telephone calls may be scheduled in advance and placed at pre-determined times, and call schedule data for a given customer may be accessed and modified by that customer via a website.
- 23. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising means for playing to a call recipient at the beginning of a call an audio announcement identifying the other party to said call, and means for including in said audio announcement information about the last time said other party placed a conferenced outbound call between himself and said recipient.
- 25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising means for playing to a call recipient at the beginning of a call an audio greeting in said call recipient's own voice.
- 27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising automatic means for sending an e-mail notification to a customer if someone said customer has designated as blocked tries to set up a call to said customer.
- 29. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a web-based dialing directory with clickable representations of numbers to be dialed.
- 30. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising means for encrypting membership numbers of other members as seen by a given member, based on the given member's own member number, and wherein customers are identified to each other through said database by uniquely encrypted member numbers.

- 31. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising privacy-protected mail means for leaving a private message for an intended call recipient if an intended recipient is not reachable, said voice mail being retrievable only by the intended recipient through the use of private member-identification information.
- 32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, further comprising inbound call receiving means allowing retrieval of privacy-protected voice mail by dialing a number and entering member identification information.
- 33. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising means allowing any member to automatically generate a temporary membership number for a prospective member, and means to automatically generate a permanent membership for that prospective member when that prospective member uses said temporary membership number to become a member, and automatically replace occurrences of said temporary membership number in said database with member numbers uniquely related to said permanent member number.
- 34. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising means for serving a web page indicative of call placement progress.
- 35. (Original) The apparatus of claim 34, further comprising means to serve a web page allowing call placement options of an intended call does not go through.
- 36. (Original) The apparatus of claim 35, further comprising means for periodically checking a busy line, and setting up a call when said line stops being busy.
- 37. (Original) The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising timing means to stop the checking of the busy line after a customer-specified amount of time.

- 38. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said database further comprises for each customer phone numbers at which said customer can be contacted, and further comprising web-based sign-up and account access means, and automated outbound call placement during sign-up, wherein said outbound calls are placed to all contact numbers specified for the person signing up, and proper PIN code entry is required during said automated calls during sign-up in order to validate phone numbers to be called to reach said person.
- 40. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said database further comprises information for each customer indicating at what phone numbers said customer can be dialed.
- 41. (Original) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein said database further comprises for each customer said customer's preferences as to what phone said customer is allowed to be called at and at what times.
- 42. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said database further comprises for each customer what phone numbers said customer is reachable at by any particular other customer.
- 43. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said database further comprises for each customer past call information including time of each call and member number of calling or called party, and further comprising means for serving up such past call information as web page data.
- 44. (Original) The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising means for disabling or enabling callers in response to web click data received from a browser viewing said past call information.

- 46. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said database further comprises for each customer professional services rate information, and further comprising means to charge customers for professional service time of a called party in addition to connection charges.
- 47. (Original) The apparatus of claim 46, further comprising means for serving up web-based schedule information for professional service providers, allowing web-based sign-up for paid telephone time with professional service providers.
- 48. (Original) The apparatus of claim 23, further comprising means for a called party to initiate automatic delivery of a pre-recorded audio message to a caller prior to and in place of connecting said caller to said called party.

METHOD CLAIMS

- 49. (Original) A method of doing business comprising auctioning professional service time on the web.
- 50. (Original) A method of fund-raising comprising auctioning teleconference time with celebrities on the web, automatically calling high bidders and connecting them to said teleconference, and automatically billing teleconference participants the amounts they bid to be on said teleconference.
- 51. (Previously presented) A method for placing conferenced multiple outbound telephone calls, comprising:

- a. Receiving dialing information specifying a call-initiating party, a call-receiving party, and a call time over the internet;
- b. checking within a database to verify that said call time is within allowed contact time window criteria set up by said call-receiving party regarding a call-initiating party;
- c. checking within a database to verify that said call-initiating party is specified as an allowed caller by said call-receiving party;
- d. placing a plurality of outbound telephone calls in response to said dialing information only if said call time falls within said allowed contact time window criteria and said callinitiating party is listed as an allowed caller by said call receiving party;
- e. connecting said multiple outbound calls together as a conference call in response to both called parties answering said calls.
- 53. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51 wherein said conferencing connection is done external to a telephone company switch.
- 54. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51 wherein the connecting of said outbound calls further comprises sending digital network commands to a telephone carrier switch to offload and maintain the connection.
- 59. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising checking allowed group contact criteria if said dialing information indicates that said callinitiating party is initiating said call as a member of a

call-enabled group, and placing said call only if said group is currently contact-enabled by said call-receiving party.

- 60. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein said calling information is indicative of both individual information and group information.
- 61. (Previously presented) The method of claim 60, wherein said group must be currently enabled and said individual must not be currently disabled for said call-receiving party within said database in order for said conferenced calls to be placed.
- 63. (Original) The method of claim 51, further comprising serving up customer information as a web page, and accepting customer modification of customer call setup and call-receiving parameters via the internet.
- 66. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51, wherein said database further comprises billability status, and where billability status may include fully billable status, split-billing status, or non-billable status, and wherein the billability status of each customer may be individually defined with respect to every other customer...
- 67. (Previously presented) A method of placing an international telephone call between a calling party and a called party, comprising initiating outbound telephone calls to said called party and said calling party through an internet-based interface, and connecting said outbound calls together after both said parties answer said outbound calls.
- 68. (Previously presented) The method of claim 67, wherein said calling party is in a first country, and said called party is in a second country, and said outbound telephone calls originate from a third country.

- 71. (Previously presented) A method for placing long-distance telephone calls at optimized rates, comprising supplying a calling party's number and a called party's number through a website, selecting a telecommunications provider to connect said called party and said calling party based on rate information, placing outbound calls to said called party and said calling party, and connecting said called party to said calling party after both said parties answer said outbound calls.
- 72. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising automatically making conferenced outbound calls at times scheduled in advance in said database.
- 73. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising automatically playing to said call-receiving party at the beginning of a call an audio announcement identifying the other party to said call, and allowing said call recipient to deliver an audio message to said calling party without being connected to said calling party.
- 74. (Original) The method of claim 73, further comprising automatically playing to said call-receiving party at the beginning of a call audio information about the time the call-initiating party last called.
- 75. (Previously presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising playing to the call-receiving party at the beginning of a call an audio greeting in the call-receiving party's own voice.
- 77. (Previously presented) A system for establishing a real-time communications connection between a user and a selected information service provider for a live, real-time conversation, the system comprising:

- a communications interface; and
- a controller computer linked with the communications interface, the controller computer having:
- a first logic unit to provide a list of information service providers from a wide array of fields of service to the user;
- a second logic unit, in response to the user selecting the selected information service provider from the list, to assign the user a position in a queue when one or more other users have also selected the selected information service provider, the queue having a plurality of other positions, each occupied by one of the one or more of other users waiting to communicate with the selected information provider;
- a third logic unit to receive a bid from the user when the user desires to advance position within the queue;
- a fourth logic unit to compare the bid with each price being offered by each of the one or more other users, such that each price being offered by each of the one or more other users is initially equal to a price charged by the selected information service provider for providing services in a live, real-time conversation with the user;
- a fifth logic unit to advance the user to a position in the queue ahead of each other positions occupied by each other users whose price is lower than the bid; and
- a sixth logic unit to establish a real-time communications connection via the communications interface between the user and the selected information service provider for the live real time conversation when the user advances to a first

position in the queue and the selected information service provider is available to communicate with the user.

ClideCall Final Office Action



United States Patent and Trademark Office

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE United States Patent and Trademark Office Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO	
09/752,365	12/29/2000	Lee Weinstein	8453 EXAMINER		
28731 75	90 09/08/2004				
LEE WEINSTEIN			TAYLOR, BARRY W		
35 FAIRMONT ARLINGTON,	_		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
ARLINGTON,	WA 02474		2643		
			DATE MAILED: 09/08/2004		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

*	Application No.	Applicant(s)					
Office Aut o	09/752,365	WEINSTEIN ET AL.					
Office Action Summary	Examiner	Art Unit					
	Barry W Taylor	2643					
The MAILING DATE of this communication a Period for Reply	ppears on the cover sheet wit	h the correspondence address					
A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REF THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION - Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a re - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory perior - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statt Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mail earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).	J. 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a re eply within the statutory minimum of thirty ld will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONT ute. cause the application to become ABA	ply be timely filed (30) days will be considered timely. HS from the mailing date of this communication.					
Status							
1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02	June 2004.						
2a)⊠ This action is FINAL . 2b)□ Th	nis action is non-final.						
3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allow							
closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.							
Disposition of Claims							
4)	awn from consideration. 44,46-51,53,54,59-61,63,66-	<u>68 and 71-76</u> is/are rejected.					
Application Papers							
9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examir	ner						
	cepted or b) objected to b	v the Examiner					
Applicant may not request that any objection to the							
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the corre	ction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).					
11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the E	Examiner. Note the attached	Office Action or form PTO-152.					
Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119	- '						
12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreig a) All b) Some * c) None of: 1. Certified copies of the priority document 2. Certified copies of the priority document 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority document application from the International Bureat * See the attached detailed Office action for a list	nts have been received. Its have been received in Appority documents have been reau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).	olication No eceived in this National Stage					
Attachment(s)							
1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) Interview Sur	nmary (PTO-413)					
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SR/08	Mail Date						
Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08 Paper No(s)/Mail Date		5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) 6) Other:					

Continuation Sheet (PTOL-326)

Application No. 09/752,365

Continuation of Disposition of Claims: Claims pending in the application are 1,7-11,13,15,22,23,25,27,29-38,40-44,46-51,53,54,59-61,63,66-68 and 71-76.

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

- 1. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The Examiner has preformed a text search of Applicant's specification and cannot find support for the newly added terms of "allowed callers from whom customers are willing to receive calls".
- 2. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The Examiner has preformed a text search of Applicant's specification and cannot find support for the newly added terms of "timing telephone connection time".

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- 3. Claim 51 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The Examiner has preformed a text search of Applicant's specification and cannot find support for the newly added terms of "specifying a call-initiating party". The Examiner has preformed a text search of Applicant's specification and cannot find support for the newly added terms of "specifying a call-receiving party". The Examiner has preformed a text search of Applicant's specification and cannot find support for the newly added terms of "verify" that call time is within". The Examiner has preformed a text search of Applicant's specification and cannot find support for the newly added terms of "checking with a database to verify that said call-initiating party is specified as an allowed caller by said call-receiving party". The Examiner performed text search of "allowed caller" and no results were found.
- 4. Claim 76 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The Examiner is unable to determine from the originally filed specification as to how one of ordinary skill in the art would be able to make and use the invention. The

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specification provides no basis for the claimed subject matter. Specifically, as by way of example, claim 76 generally recites providing list of service providers for user selection. The system then places user in queue. Next, a bid is received and compared with other bids and if bid is higher then user placed higher in queue. The Examiner is unable to find any support in Applicant's specification that enables user to select service provider let alone using queue.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 15 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 15 depends upon previously cancelled claim 5. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 67 is objected to because of the following informalities: It is unclear to the Examiner as to whether Applicant's intend to include claim 68 into currently amended claim 67 or Applicant's forgot to press the carriage return key to separate claim 67 from claim 68. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 71 is objected to because of the following informalities: It is unclear to the Examiner as to whether Applicant's intend to include claim 72 into currently amended claim 71 or Applicant's forgot to press the carriage return key to separate claim 71 from claim 72. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 76 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 76 was previously cancelled (see paper number 6, Amendment "A", dated 6/27/2003, page63).

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It appears newly added claim 76 should read as newly added claim 77. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claim 76 (should read as claim 77 see 112 rejection listed above) is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Faber et al (6,519,570 hereinafter Faber). The following rejection is being made for what is best understood by the Examiner due to numerous 112 rejections listed above.

Regarding claim 76. Faber teaches a system for establishing a real-time communications connection between a user and a selected information service provider for a live, real-time conversation, the system comprising (col. 8 lines 40-44):

a communication interface (col. 8 line 45); and

a controller ... (col. 8 line 46-47) having:

a first logic ... (col. 8 lines 48-50);

a second logic ... (col. 8 lines 51-58);

a third logic ... (col. 8 lines 59-60);

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a forth logic ... (col. 8 lines 6167); a fifth logic ... (col. 9 lines 1-4); a sixth logic ... (col. 9 lines 5-11).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.
- 7. Claims 1, 7, 9-11, 13, 15, 22-23, 25, 27, 29-38, 40-44, 48, 51, 53-54, 59-61, 63, 66-68 and 71-75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glenn et al (5,907,677 hereinafter Glenn) in view of DuVal (5,818,836) and Haste, III (6,665,389 hereinafter Haste) further in view of Cho (5,937,039).

Regarding claims 1, 22, 25, 29-38, 40-44, 51, 67-68, 71-73 and 75. Glenn teaches a method for establishing anonymous communication links for Internet users who are communicating over a Chat server, as well as other on-line services (col. 2 line 65 – col. 3 line 30). Glenn teaches subscribers access Chat page to obtain telephone number to establish anonymous voice connection without exchanging telephone numbers (col. 3 lines 62-66).

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According to Applicant's, Glenn does not teach the use of the website to initiate calls (see paper number 6, Amendment "A", dated 6/27/03, page 2 lines 4-7).

DuVal teaches method and apparatus for anonymous voice communication using an online data service (abstract). DuVal modifies the Chat page (figure 4) to include window (see pull down window 74 figure 4) or icons (see icons 108 and 86 figure 4) to be selected by subscribers for anonymous voice call. DuVal discloses although two parties are shown in figures, it is to be understood that numerous parties may be connected to the system (col. 5 lines 13-16). DuVal discloses the system may call the parties or one of the parties may call the system to set up the anonymous voice communication (col. 9 line 66 - col. 10 line 8, col. 11 lines 9-22). DuVal discloses that 800, 900, or local number may be used for a carrier or non-carrier based service (col. 12 lines 3-13). DuVal discloses the parties must agree, without revealing their identity, upon a time to call (col. 11 line 55 – col. 12 line 13). DuVal discloses billing functions including using credit cards and checking account (col. 13 line 62 - col. 14 line 11). DuVal discloses using greetings which allow the receiving party to accept or reject the call (col. 16 lines 1-16) as well as offering other party pays option (col. 16 line 16-65). DuVal discloses that either party can initiate an anonymous voice connection (col. 16 line 65). DuVal discloses parties currently involved with public or private chat can simply click on icon (see 86 or 108 figure 4) or select menu (see 76 figure 4) for anonymous voice connection. DuVal discloses the possibility for scheduling an anonymous voice call (col. 19 lines 11-41). DuVal discloses a distribution implementation to establish anonymous voice connection for parties located in different

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cities (col. 19 line 52 – col. 20 line 40) wherein the closest node is selected to connect the requesting party to a remote party (col. 20 lines 55-65).

According to Applicant's, Glenn fails to use database comprising times when customers have specified they are willing to receive calls (see paper number 6, Amendment "A", dated 6/27/03, page 1, the prior art uncovered by Examiner section).

Haste improves on prior art by allowing subscribers to select a series of times he or she wants associated to telephone numbers (col. 1 lines 63-65). In other words, Haste allows for multiple telephone numbers to be listed with specified times of day during which the subscriber can be reached at those numbers (col. 2 lines 63-67, col. 3 lines 6-34). Haste also allows profile to be set up by users that only allows certain "callers" meeting user selected profile (see figure 1B "Allow contact from members who fit my profile only:").

Applicant's further amend and argue that Glen in view of Haste fail to teach communicating the dialing limitations back to the caller (see paper number 8, Amendment "B", dated 6/17/2004, page 1 last paragraph).

Cho allows subscribers to choose in advance an absent message representing his absent reason which is then transmitted to the caller's who are attempting to call the subscriber (abstract, col. 1 lines 19-22, col. 3 lines 48-51, col. 4 lines 63-65, col. 5 lines 46-51, col. 7 lines 40-47). Cho is very clear in that the present invention has the advantage that the <u>caller can be advised of the absent reason of the called-up party</u>

and the proper time for calling up again (col. 9 lines 14-17).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious for any one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the on-line Chat page as taught Glenn in view of DuVal and Haste to incorporate absent message as taught by Cho for the benefit of expanding user profiles to incorporate an absent reason and proper time to call thereby enabling the caller to know when to call back and the reason the called party is not taking telephony calls.

Regarding newly amended claim 7. Glenn fails to teach allowed time criteria are separately definable for different allowed callers.

Haste further shows user selectable profiles include: "Hide your profile form this member and disallow further contact:", "Allow Phone Calls from this member:", "Keep my ad hidden from the following email addresses or members:", "Keep my ad hidden from everyone BUT the following email addresses or members:" (see figure 1B).

It would have been obvious for any one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the on-line Chat page as taught by Glenn in view of Duval to first establish user profiles as taught by Haste for the benefit of establishing and selecting what profiles to be employed during anonymous communication.

Regarding claims 9-11, 27 and 59-61. Glenn teaches defining group (col. 4 lines 6-7).

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Regarding claims 13 and 63. According to Applicant's, Glenn does not teach the use of the website to initiate calls (see paper number 6, Amendment "A", dated 6/27/03, page 2 lines 4-7).

DuVal teaches method and apparatus for anonymous voice communication using an online data service (abstract). DuVal modifies the Chat page (figure 4) to include window (see pull down window 74 figure 4) or icons (see icons 108 and 86 figure 4) to be selected by subscribers for anonymous voice call. DuVal discloses although two parties are shown in figures, it is to be understood that numerous parties may be connected to the system (col. 5 lines 13-16). DuVal discloses the system may call the parties or one of the parties may call the system to set up the anonymous voice communication (col. 9 line 66 – col. 10 line 8, col. 11 lines 9-22). DuVal discloses that 800, 900, or local number may be used for a carrier or non-carrier based service (col. 12 lines 3-13). DuVal discloses the parties must agree, without revealing their identity, upon a time to call (col. 11 line 55 – col. 12 line 13). DuVal discloses billing functions including using credit cards and checking account (col. 13 line 62 – col. 14 line 11). DuVal discloses using greetings which allow the receiving party to accept or reject the call (col. 16 lines 1-16) as well as offering other party pays option (col. 16 line 16-65). DuVal discloses that either party can initiate an anonymous voice connection (col. 16 line 65). DuVal discloses parties currently involved with public or private chat can simply click on icon (see 86 or 108 figure 4) or select menu (see 76 figure 4) for anonymous voice connection. DuVal discloses the possibility for scheduling an

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anonymous voice call (col. 19 lines 11-41). DuVal discloses a distribution implementation to establish anonymous voice connection for parties located in different cities (col. 19 line 52 – col. 20 line 40) wherein the closest node is selected to connect the requesting party to a remote party (col. 20 lines 55-65).

Haste improves on prior art by allowing subscribers to select a series of times he or she wants associated to telephone numbers (col. 1 lines 63-65). In other words, Haste allows for multiple telephone numbers to be listed with specified times of day during which the subscriber can be reached at those numbers (col. 2 lines 63-67, col. 3 lines 6-34).

Therefore, it would have been obvious for any one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the on-line Chat page as taught Glenn in view of DuVal to store plurality of numbers with specified times as taught by Haste for the benefit of routing calls to work between the times of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. and then route calls to cell phone form 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and use home phone from 7:30 p.m. to midnight as taught by Haste.

Regarding claims 15 and 66. Glenn teaches billing for anonymous voice connection by using credit card, Cybercash, or other form (column 4). DuVal also teaches one party may pay the charges associated with the other party (column 16)

Regarding claims 23, 48, and 74. DuVal shows information relating to last contact (see figure 5 "COUPLE RECORD", and "MESSAGE RECORD").

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Regarding claim 53. DuVal shows conferencing done external to a telephone company (see #14 figures 1-3).

Regarding claim 54. DuVal shows digital signal used (see #68 figures 1-3).

8. Claims 8, 46-47 and 49-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glenn et al (5,907,677 hereinafter Glenn) in view of DuVal (5,818,836), Haste, III (6,665,389 hereinafter Haste) and Cho (5,937,039) further in view of Lauffer (6,549,889).

Regarding claim 8. Glenn in view of DuVal, Haste and Cho fail to show using allowed contact time.

Lauffer teaches facilitating and delivery of advice to consumers using a server for rapidly assisting in connecting an expert and consumer for real-time communications (abstract). Lauffer server has ability to respond to a consumer's selection of expert by sending the consumer conveyance through means to contact experts that include but are not limited to telephone, Internet telephony, email, audio, and/or video (column 6). Lauffer using time-to-connect and expert compensation rate, time availability, etc (col. 5 lines 1-2, lines 15-16, lines 40-67, col. 6 lines 56-67). Lauffer even discloses that in another embodiment, a special symbol/notation is displayed next to or as part of an experts symbol if he has been certified by selected companies or organizations wherein the symbol/notation can optionally expire, disappear, or change its characteristics (color, etc) after a certain length of time so that the expert is forced to take tests to

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maintain certification (column 7). Lauffer even discloses displaying plurality of experts with varying compensation rates (column 7).

It would have been obvious for any one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the invention as taught by Glenn in view of DuVal, Haste and Cho to modify web page to include expert advice as taught by Lauffer for the benefit of providing subscribers with a list of experts, the time availability of the expert, and the compensation rate for consumer advice with expert as taught by Lauffer.

Regarding claims 46-47 and 49-50. Glenn in view of DuVal, Haste and Cho fail to show charging for professional service.

DuVal teaches method and apparatus for anonymous voice communication using an online data service (abstract). DuVal modifies the Chat page (figure 4) to include window (see pull down window 74 figure 4) or icons (see icons 108 and 86 figure 4) to be selected by subscribers for anonymous voice call. DuVal discloses although two parties are shown in figures, it is to be understood that numerous parties may be connected to the system (col. 5 lines 13-16). DuVal discloses the system may call the parties or one of the parties may call the system to set up the anonymous voice communication (col. 9 line 66 – col. 10 line 8, col. 11 lines 9-22). DuVal discloses that 800, 900, or local number may be used for a carrier or non-carrier based service (col. 12 lines 3-13). DuVal discloses the parties must agree, without revealing their identity, upon a time to call (col. 11 line 55 – col. 12 line 13). DuVal discloses billing functions including using credit cards and checking account (col. 13 line 62 – col. 14 line 11).

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DuVal discloses using greetings which allow the receiving party to accept or reject the call (col. 16 lines 1-16) as well as offering other party pays option (col. 16 line 16-65). DuVal discloses that either party can initiate an anonymous voice connection (col. 16 line 65). DuVal discloses parties currently involved with public or private chat can simply click on icon (see 86 or 108 figure 4) or select menu (see 76 figure 4) for anonymous voice connection. DuVal discloses the possibility for scheduling an anonymous voice call (col. 19 lines 11-41). DuVal discloses a distribution implementation to establish anonymous voice connection for parties located in different cities (col. 19 line 52 – col. 20 line 40) wherein the closest node is selected to connected the requesting party to a remote party (col. 20 lines 55-65).

Haste improves on prior art by allowing subscribers to select a series of times he or she wants associated to telephone numbers (col. 1 lines 63-65). In other words, Haste allows for multiple telephone numbers to be listed with specified times of day during which the subscriber can be reached at those numbers (col. 2 lines 63-67, col. 3 lines 6-34).

Lauffer teaches facilitating and delivery of advice to consumers using a server for rapidly assisting in connecting an expert and consumer for real-time communications (abstract). Lauffer server has ability to respond to a consumer's selection of expert by sending the consumer conveyance through means to contact experts that include but are not limited to telephone, Internet telephony, email, audio, and/or video (column 6). Lauffer using time-to-connect and expert compensation rate, time availability, etc (col. 5 lines 1-2, lines 15-16, lines 40-67, col. 6 lines 56-67). Lauffer even discloses that in

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another embodiment, a special symbol/notation is displayed next to or as part of an experts symbol if he has been certified by selected companies or organizations wherein the symbol/notation can optionally expire, disappear, or change its characteristics (color, etc) after a certain length of time so that the expert is forced to take tests to maintain certification (column 7). Lauffer even discloses displaying plurality of experts with varying compensation rates (column 7).

It would have been obvious for any one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the invention as taught by Glenn in view of DuVal, Haste and Cho to modify web page to include expert advice as taught by Lauffer for the benefit of providing subscribers with a list of experts, the time availability of the expert, and the compensation rate for consumer advice with expert as taught by Lauffer.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 7-11, 13, 15, 22-23, 25, 27, 29-38, 40-44, 46-51, 53-54, 59-61, 63, 66-68, 71-75 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

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§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Barry W. Taylor whose telephone number is (703) 305-4811. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 6:30am to 4pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis Kuntz can be reached on (703) 305-4708. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to Technology Center 2600 customer service Office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

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Notice of References Cited						Art Unit	WEINSTEIN ET AL.		
						Examiner Parties		Page 1 of 1	
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*		Document Number	Date	U.S. F.	ATENT DOCUM			Classification	
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*	A	US-5,937,039	08-1999	Cho, Seung-Hwan				379/93.17	
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A copy of this reference is not being furnished with this Office action. (See MPEP § 707.05(a).)

*Dates in MM-YYYY format are publication dates. Classifications may be US or foreign.

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office PTO-892 (Rev. 01-2001)